



LEESBURG BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW STAFF REPORT

**PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING: 19 NOVEMBER 2012
AGENDA ITEM 7a**

BAR Case No. THLP-2012-0098: Bus Shelter for VA Regional Transit at 448 S. King Street (Rite Aid)
BAR Case No. THLP-2012-0099: Bus Shelter for VA Regional Transit at 720 S. King Street (Food Lion)

Reviewer: Kim K. Del Rance, LEED AP
Address: **448 S. King St and 720 S. King Street**
Zoning: B-2, H-2 Overlay District
Applicant/Owner: Gary Finiff, Virginia Regional Transit

Site Description: Each of these sites is along the perimeter of the property where an existing bus stop sign is located. Both buildings are not historic and are contemporary commercial sites. The bus shelters will be the same in both places and have the potential to be replicated in other future bus stop locations around the town outside of the H-1 overlay district, which has a custom shelter already approved.

Context: Both sites are along the King Street corridor entry to the historic district. The area of King Street south of the intersection of Royal Street has small scale vernacular and commercial buildings from the 19th century. A small industrial section grew up around the W & OD Railroad tracks. The street has retained a high level of architectural integrity and is an important entrance to the southern section of the historic district.

Description of Proposal: Applicant proposes a generic bus shelter design for these two locations that may or may not also be used in other locations outside of any overlay district.

Site Development/Zoning Issues: None.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

Bus shelters are structures, but can also be considered a site feature; therefore the general requirements of the guidelines will have the most effective application to this request.

H-2 Overlay District Design Guidelines:

CH. 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Intent of the H-2 District is ... to promote design principles which create a better sense of transition from and balance with the intrinsic characteristics of the Old and Historic District.

CH. 2 - BUILDINGS

Compatibility between buildings is fostered by similarities among the basic characteristics that make up a building: its siting, size, scale, massing, roof + form, construction materials and use of color.

The shelter proposed is a generic mass produced shelter that has been used all across the US for many years, possibly even decades and has no historical basis in or similarity to Leesburg's architectural character or identity. The roof form is uncommon to Leesburg and the materials



are similar to the storefront materials in shopping centers, which are set back from the street and not highly visible, especially as one approaches the historic district from South King Street.

The applicant is requesting a different shelter than the approved shelter for the H-1 Historic District due to cost as the custom shelter cost was given as \$40,000.

Researching other historic district bus shelters led to a 2011 Architectural Review report from the City of Alexandria where they approved very stark minimalist modern shelters like those used in Washington, DC that use solar power to run a traffic update board and lighting for a cost of \$10,000 to \$20,000 based on configuration and amount of solar panels.



Figure 9. Proposed bus shelter with solar panels.



Using this information as a frame of reference and further research into other possible prototype manufactured shelters from the same manufacturer (Duo-Gard) as the applicant's proposed shelter, staff suggests the following to consider while reviewing this application:

Using the H-1 shelter as the "high style" architectural shelter, the entry corridor approaching the H-1 District would be appropriate to use similar forms and colors, but not necessarily materials to reduce costs and increase the possibility that the H-2 shelter would be used beyond the corridor district throughout the town to give a consistent character to bus stop shelters.

Staff encourages the applicant to consider the use of solar panels on this application whether it would be used on these shelters or not, so that future applications need not be made to the Board of Architectural Review in light of the recent hurricane and weather events leading to the loss of power in town. Having a lighted public transportation shelter could be valuable in times of emergency.

Below are examples of bus shelters that are "stripped down" versions of the H-1 shelter which could easily be altered to fit the character of Leesburg, such as a dark metal roof and white supports and trim with glass. The white shelter is used in Hampton Roads, VA and the dark trim shelter is used in Arlington, VA. Staff suggests a hipped dark metal roof with white supports and trim, similar to that of the H-1 shelter.



STAFF RECOMMENDATION/DRAFT MOTION

(Based on the BAR's discussion at the meeting, any changes to the language of either part of the motion should be incorporated as necessary.)

Based on the findings that:

- The proposed shelter is not compatible with existing buildings along the H-2 District street frontage and does not create a transition from and balance with the intrinsic characteristics of the Old and Historic District
- Alternate shelters from the same manufacturers may be appropriate if designed using Leesburg roof forms, materials and colors

Staff recommends deferral of TLHP-2012-0098 and TLHP-2012-0099 subject to the plans, photographs and materials submitted as part of this application dated September 26, 2012 until the applicant can contact the manufacturer for appropriate alternative shelter designs.

DRAFT MOTION

I move that TLHP-2012-0098 and TLHP-2012-0099 be deferred until the applicant can contact the manufacturer for appropriate alternative shelter designs.